

Honey

What is Honey?

“Honey” is defined in Chapter 3715 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to mean, “The nectar and saccharine exudation of plants that has been gathered, modified, and stored in a honeycomb by honey bees.”

Does a Honey producer/beekeeper need to acquire a license/registration to process and package their products?

A beekeeper that jars honey, when a minimum of 75% of the honey is from their own hives, is exempt from licensing, registration and mandatory inspection (ORC 3717.021). Upon request, a producer can receive a voluntary inspection, contact: Ohio Department of Agriculture, Division of Food Safety: 614-728-6250.

Processors who do not comply with the small honey processor exemption are subject to registration and inspection as a food processing establishment by the Division of Food Safety.

Is Honey a cottage food?

Honey is *not* exempt as a cottage food; it is, however, exempt under ORC 3715.021, as is maple syrup and sorghum.

Flavored honey made by a beekeeper exempt under ORC 3715.021 is a cottage food and must comply with the Cottage Food rules (Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 901:3-20). Cottage Food Production Operations are exempt from inspection and licensing by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Cottage Food products may only be sold in Ohio.

If a complaint is made, the honey kitchen may be inspected by ODA Food Safety Officials.

What are the requirements for the labeling of Honey jars or containers?

Regardless of whether or not honey is sold from a home, a market or elsewhere, it must have a label (including honey products gifted or traded) that includes the following:

1. Statement of Identity - the common or usual name of the food product;
2. Net Quantity of Contents - If sold ON SITE the label must declare the net weight in the U.S. Customary System (ounces) but does not have to have the weight in metric (grams). If sold OFF SITE, it must have both (ounces *and* grams);
3. Ingredient List - honey is a single ingredient food; an Ingredient List is *not* required;
4. Statement of Responsibility - the name and address of the business.

The label should be glued or “secured”, however if the jars/containers are an unusual shape and sold for a special occasion, and the label cannot be affixed, it can be attached as a card.

Note: If nutrient content claims (i.e. low fat, salt free, etc.) or health claims (i.e. may reduce heart disease) are made, the product must bear all required nutritional information in the form of the Nutrition Facts panel. All labeling components are to comply with 21 CFR Part 101, Food Labeling. The FDA Food Labeling Guide is an excellent resource for the proper labeling of food products. The web address for the FDA Food Labeling Guide is:

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/LabelingNutrition/ucm2006828.htm>

Additional labeling information on honey can be found in the FDA’s Guidance for Industry: Proper Labeling of Honey and Honey Products: <https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/ucm389501.htm>

Flavored honey from exempt beekeepers must be labeled according to the labeling requirements for Cottage Foods:

<http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/3715.023>

What are the Tolerance Levels for miticides and antibiotics?

The detection of antibiotics in any amount in any sample of honey or beeswax shall render the honey or beeswax as adulterated. *Coumaphos* shall not exceed 100 parts per billion in any sample of honey; 100 parts per million in any sample of beeswax.

What are the requirements for new and reused jar/container sanitation?

If jars for honey are to be reused, they must be washed and sanitized. Closures shall not be reused. All packaging shall be free from rust on food contact surfaces and not contain any substances or be made from any material which could damage either the color or flavor of the honey.

EXAMPLE LABEL OF BASIC LABELING COMPONENTS

Labels must comply with all applicable state and federal regulations. Labeling regulations for a honey processor are the same as those applied to other food processors. All information on the label must be truthful and not misleading. The label example below is just one way to present the required information.

Ingredient List – Most food products are required to have an Ingredient List declaring all ingredients by common or usual name in descending order of predominance by weight. Honey is a single ingredient food; an Ingredient List is not required.

Ref: ORC 3715.023

Statement of Identity – The *Statement of Identity* is the name of the food. The name shall be the common or usual name of the food, and shall accurately identify or describe the basic nature of the food or its characterizing properties or ingredients. Foods that have a Standard of Identity must conform to all requirements of the standard. The common or usual name may also include the floral source of the honey, such as “Clover Honey,” on the label.

Ref: ORC 3715.023

Statement of Responsibility

– Shall include the:

Business Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

All information in the *Statement of Responsibility* shall be continuous.

Telephone numbers, web-site addresses, and e-mail addresses are permitted, but not required. This type of extra information shall not be placed between the *Ingredient List* and the *Statement of Responsibility* and *cannot* be used in lieu of listing the business name, street address, city, state, and/or zip code.

Ref: ORC 3715.023

HONEY



OHIO BEE HONEY, 8995 E. MAIN STREET, REYNOLDSBURG, OH 43068

NET WT 8 OZ (227 g)

CFR – Code of Federal Regulations

ORC – Ohio Revised Code

FPLA – Fair Packaging and Labeling Act

The principal display panel (PDP) is that portion of the package label that is most likely to be seen by the consumer at the time of purchase.

Net Quantity of Contents – The term “NET WEIGHT” - or an appropriate abbreviation - shall be used when stating the *Net Quantity of Contents* in terms of weight. The *Net Quantity of Contents* shall be declared in both the U.S. Customary System and the SI (metric system). The second declaration shall be stated parenthetically.

The quantity of contents shall be placed on the principal display panel. It shall be within the bottom 30 percent of the area of the label panel in lines that are generally parallel to the bottom of the package as it is designed to be displayed.

Ref: CFR 21, Part 101.7; FPLA, Title 15 – Chapter 39, 1453(a) (2)

Ref: ORC 3715.023